U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Public Housing Neighborhood Networks

CONNECTING TO SUCCESS

Web Site Creation Tool:
Step-by-Step Instructions

Neighborhood
Networks

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Neighborhood Networks Web Site Creation Tool

Neighborhood Networks has designed an online Web site creation tool that provides options for center directors and staff to outreach to both residents and the surrounding community. A center Web site is an important tool for connecting residents to local resources, such as employment agencies, hospitals, colleges and universities, and banks. A center's Web site can also serve as a gateway to the larger community. Not only can it increase community awareness about the services provided at Neighborhood Networks centers, it can also showcase a center's programs, residents and accomplishments for potential partners and investors.

The following step-by-step instructional guide can help center directors, staff, and residents create a Neighborhood Networks center Web site using the online tool. This guide explains Web site creation based on the tool's eight steps. Accompanying this guide is another guide, The Asset Mapping Guide, which provides instructions for locating useful resources located within your own community. You can add links to your web site for such resources as the Career One-Stop workforce development center, colleges/universities, and youth programs to your center's Web site, making it easier for residents to locate needed assistance.

This guide is created for <u>all</u> Neighborhood Networks centers. While there may be references to Multifamily (MF) Neighborhood Networks centers or Public Housing (PH) Neighborhood Networks centers, the instructions for Web site creation apply to both groups.

I. Access to the Web Site Creation Tool

a. Log into Neighborhood Networks at Work

To gain access to the Neighborhood Networks Web Site Creation Tool, go to the Neighborhood Networks at Work login page using the following Uniform Resource Locator (URL) shortcut: http://lnshhq05w.hud.gov/NN/start.nsf/default. Once at the login page, select the **Center Users** link as shown below in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Log-in to the at Work Portal
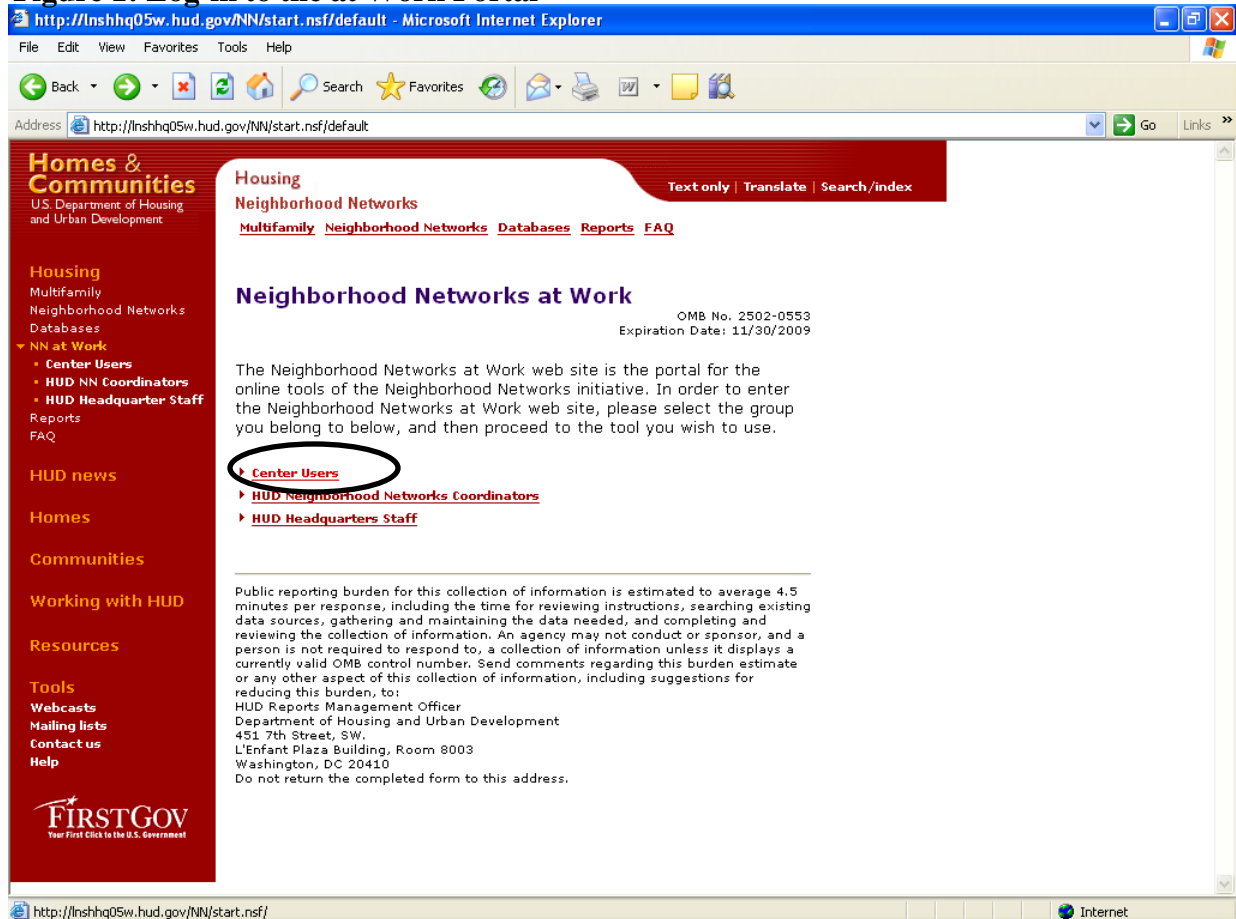
b. Center Login

   i. At the **Center Login** screen, select the state from the drop down list.
  ii. Allow the list to refresh and locate your center name. Center names are separated in two lists. One is labeled **Multifamily Neighborhood Networks Centers** and the other **Public Housing Neighborhood Networks Centers**. Headings appear in the drop down list for each. Make sure you are using the correct list when locating your center.
 iii. Enter the username created when the login account was established.
 iv. Enter the password selected when the login account was created. See **Figure 2**.
  v. If you are unsure of your username and password, contact the Neighborhood Networks Information Center at (888) 312-2743 ext 2 and a coordinator will provide the access codes.
 vi. For those who have not created a login account and password use this <u>login and password creation</u> link and follow the instructions provided. Assistance is also available through the Information Center's toll-free number listed above.

Figure 2: Center Log-in

II. Web Site Creation Tool Entry

a. Enter the Web Site Creation Tool

i. Once access is granted, select the **Neighborhood Networks Center Web Site** link. See **Figure 3**.

ii. At the **Center Web Site Management** screen, select the **click to create a new center Web site** profile link. On subsequent visits and after the center's Web site is created, the **click to update the center Web site** will appear for you to select. See **Figure 4**.

iii. When the message prompts **are you sure you want to create a public center Web site profile,** select **OK**.
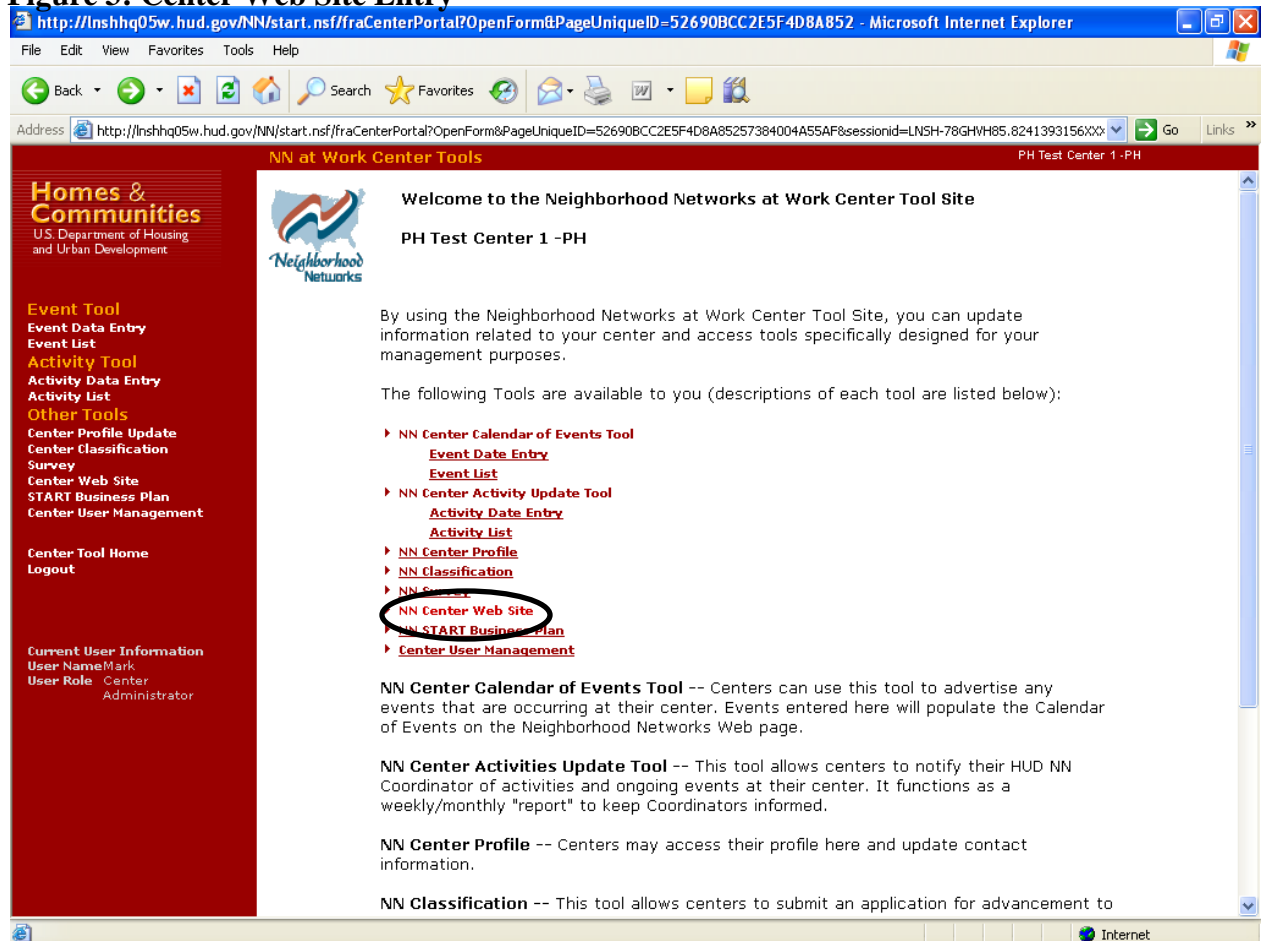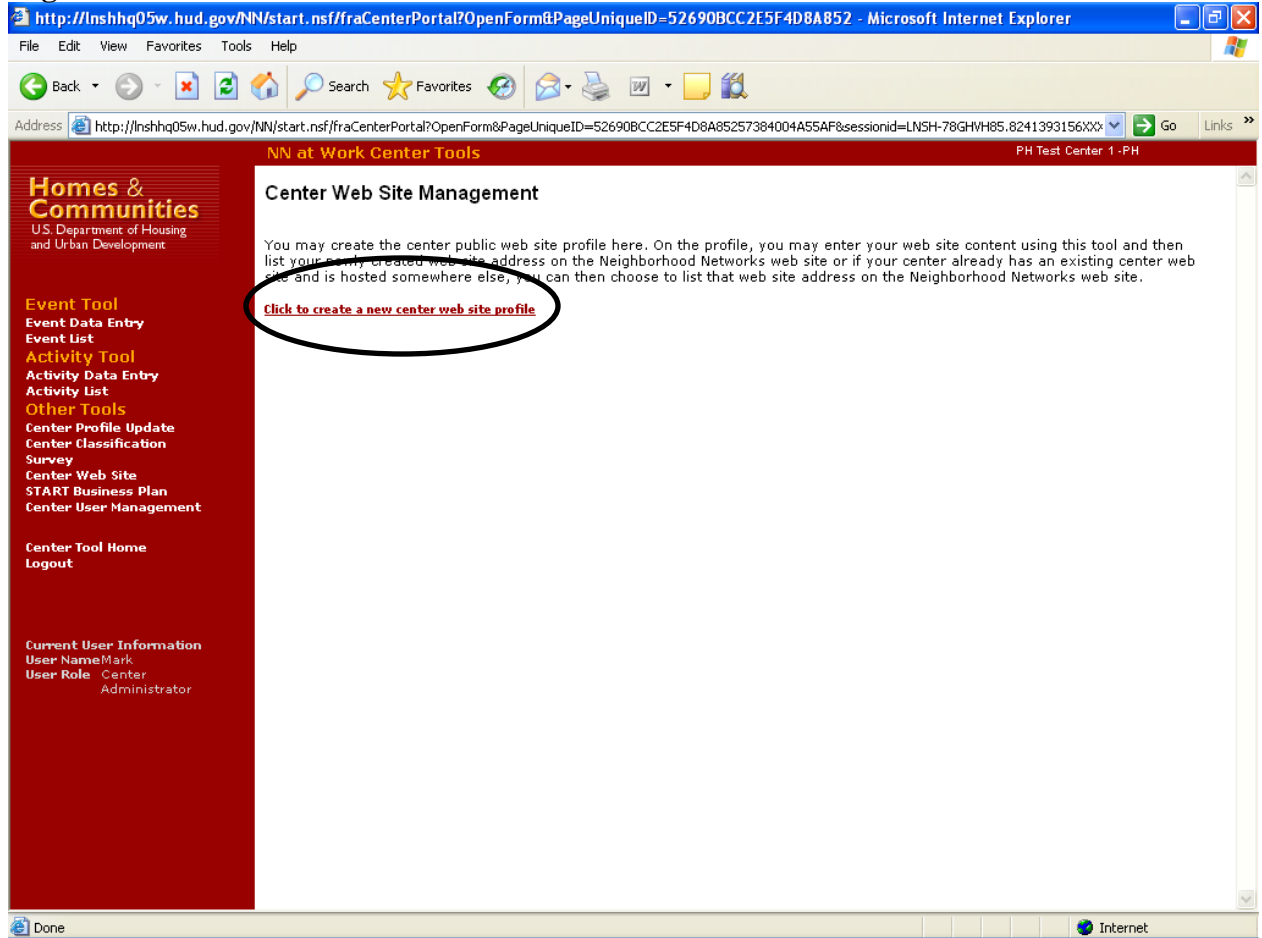
Figure 3: Center Web Site Entry

Figure 4: Create a Center Web Site Profile

III. Web Site Creation Instructions

Step 1. Web Site Selection

Centers with Existing Web sites
The Web Site Creation Tool allows centers to link an existing Web site to the Neighborhood Networks and have that site available on the Neighborhood Networks Web Site. This is an extra benefit for the centers because it increases the awareness of the center within the Neighborhood Networks community, with partners, and potential funders.

1. If you already have a Web site and would like to use it instead of creating a new one, you must enter the URL in the box provided in this section as shown in **Figure 5**. However, before adding the name of an existing Web site address, select the **View Center Web Site List** link also shown below in **Figure 5** to ensure that the name of your Web site is not already in use by another center. If the name is in use, you will be prompted to choose another name for your site. Once a Web site name is chosen, save the name by clicking **Save**. Once the center's Web address is saved and linked to Neighborhood Networks, center staff should use the instructions in #3 below to make the address available to the public.
2. If you do not have a Web site then select the "use the center web site created using this tool" radio button and proceed through the Steps listed in the following pages, starting with **Step 2**.

Opening the Site to the Public
Also included in Step 1 is an option to open the center's site to the public.

3. You should wait until all content is added, the links work, and the site meets your approval before selecting the **Open to Public** option. Once the **site is created**, you can return to this page to click the **Open to Public** option. Now your **site is linked** to Neighborhood Networks and viewable by all who inquire about Neighborhood Networks centers. This means interested parties will be able to find your Web page using search engines such as Google and Yahoo.

Figure 5: Select a Web Site Address

Step 2. Web Editor Selection

Two Methods for Creating Your Site

Easy Text Method
This section allows you to choose between the **Easy** (text only) method to create your site and the **Hypertext Markup Language** (HTML) method. When using the Easy method, content is restricted to text only, one image only (for the homepage), and allows limited formatting. By selecting the Easy method as shown in **Figure 6** below, you can view the options available to create and customize a Web site using this method.

HTML Method
The HTML method provides you with unlimited creation and customization options. It either requires basic knowledge of HTML or requires that you create documents in Word and convert the content into HTML format. Converting to HTML using Word is easy to do. Simply save the Word content as a Web page. Then, once it's converted into HTML code, copy the code and paste it into the Web Site Creation Tool. All instructions following are based on using the HTML method to create a center Web site.

Once again, the HTML method provides greater flexibility and more options for the site's appearance. Using the HTML method is recommended.

NOTE: Only one method at a time can be used to create a Web site using the tool.

Figure 6: Easy Method's Limited Formatting
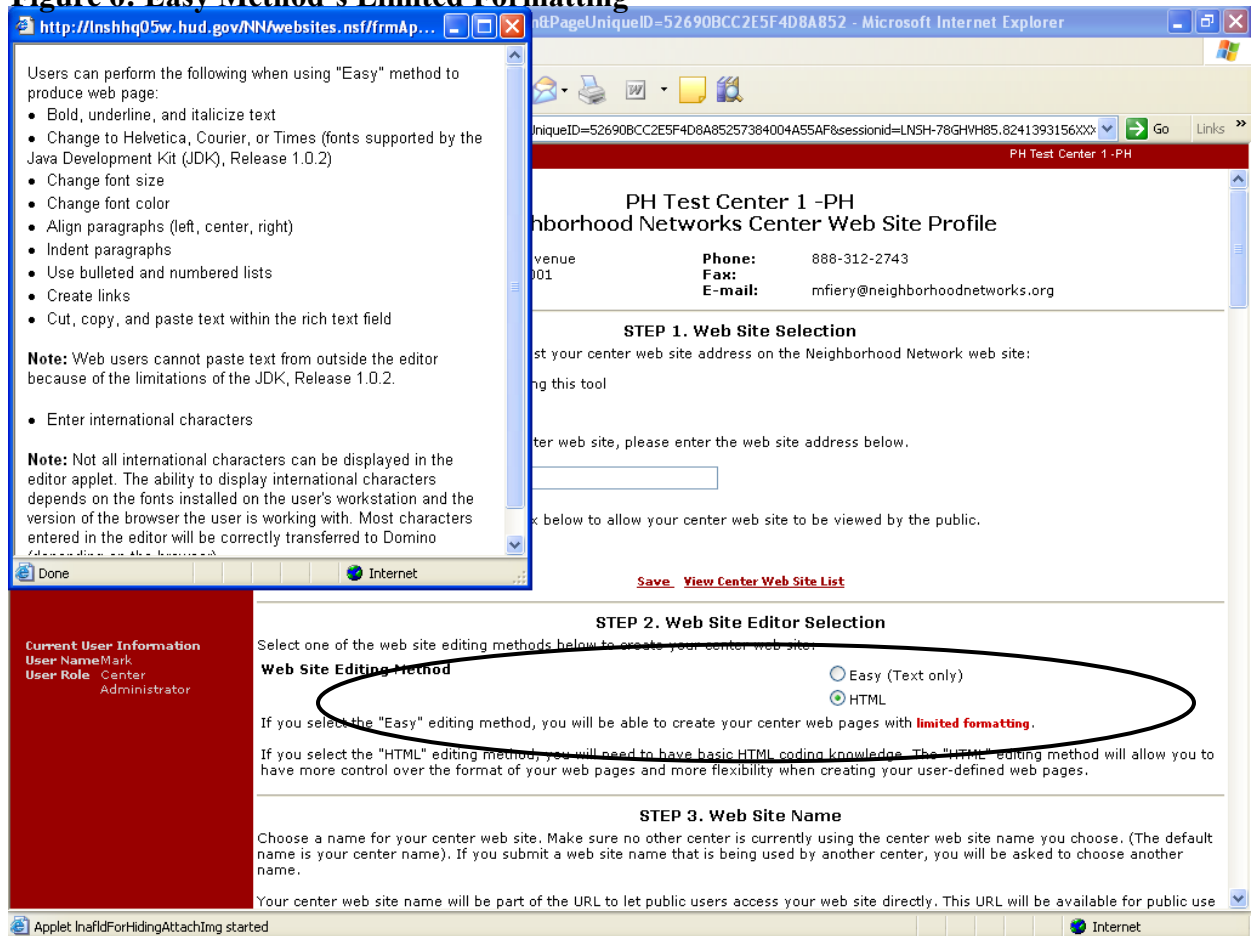
Step 3. Web Site Name

The default name assigned to a Neighborhood Networks center Web site is the center's name. The URL for the site will be comprised of this name. The center name used to comprise the URL is taken directly from the center name located in the Center Profile. Therefore, the URL will include spaces in the name. **Removing all spaces from the center name is __recommended__.** This allows the general public to locate the center's Web site more easily. You can remove the spacing found in the box located to the right of **Web Site Name**, then click **Save** to reflect the change. See **Figure 7**. If you choose a name other than the default name, enter a new Web site name in the box located to the

right of **Web Site Name**, scroll down to the very bottom of the page, and click **Save**. If the new Web site name is already chosen by another center, you will be prompted to choose another name.

Once the change is saved, the screen will refresh and bring you back to the top of the page. Then scroll down to the **Web Site Name** pane and view the chosen Web site name.

Figure 7: Create a Web Site Name

Step 4. Web Site Style Design

Step four allows you to select the center's Web site design. The three templates from which to choose are shown in **Figure 8**. The templates are available to those selecting either the Easy or HTML method of creating their Web site. A different template option can be selected at any time, even after the site is ready to go **live** or is opened to the public.

Figure 8: Web Site Design Template Options
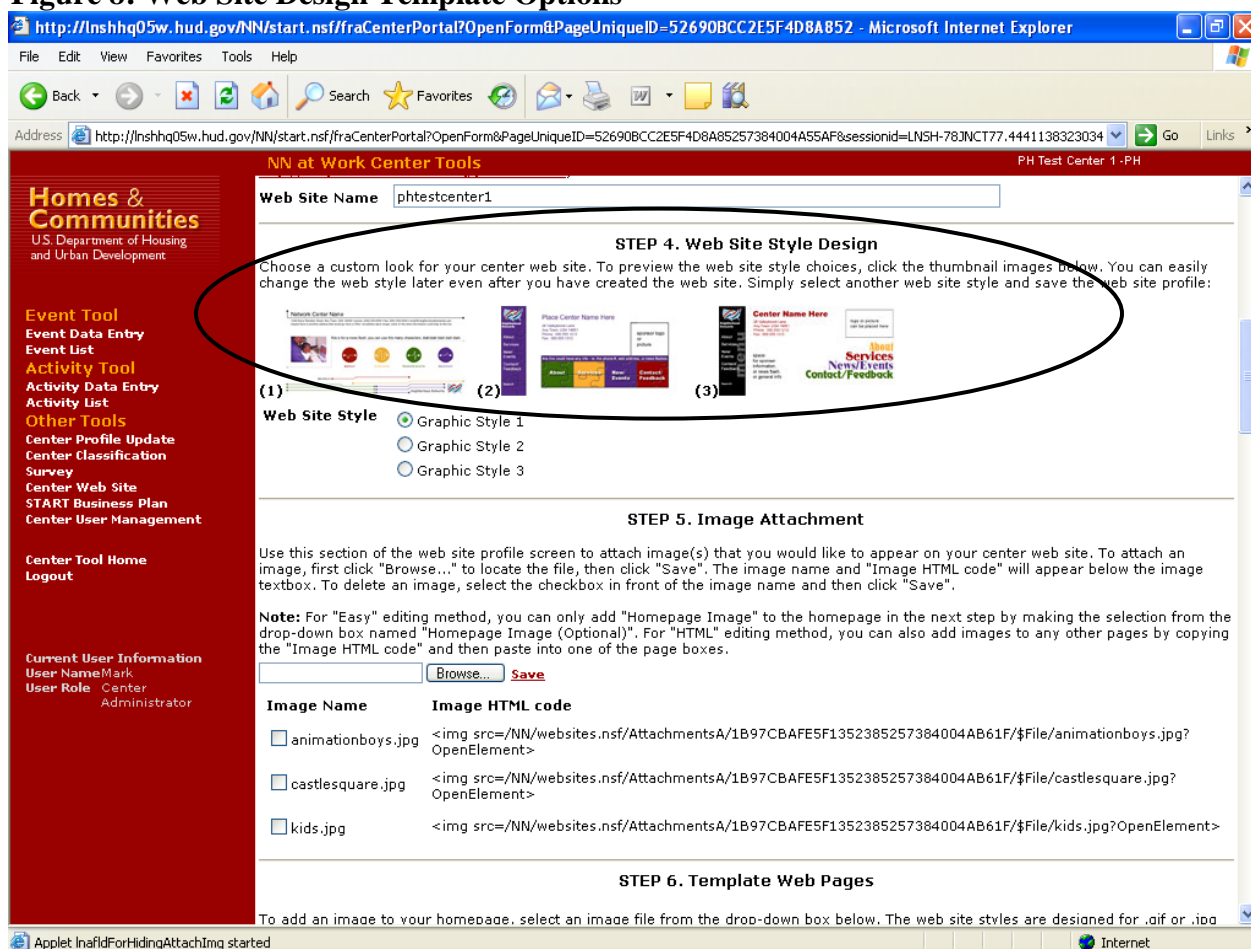
Step 5. Image Attachment

The Web Site Creation Tool enables the upload of images to the Web site using the jpg graphics file format. Click on the **Browse** button to locate an image saved on your computer, then click **Open** to add the image to your site, and then select the **Save** link beside the **Browse** button. The name of the image will appear along with the HTML code for the picture. See **Figure 9** for "uploading an image" instructions and **Figure 10** for **"**saving" instructions. You may wish to create a specific folder just for pictures you intend to use for your center's Web site.

The Easy Method versus the HTML Method
The Easy method allows you to post only one image to the center's Web site. Additionally, that image will only appear on the Homepage in a fixed location. By contrast, the HTML method allows you to copy the code of several images and placing them in any section of the site or in various locations.

Figure 9: Upload Images
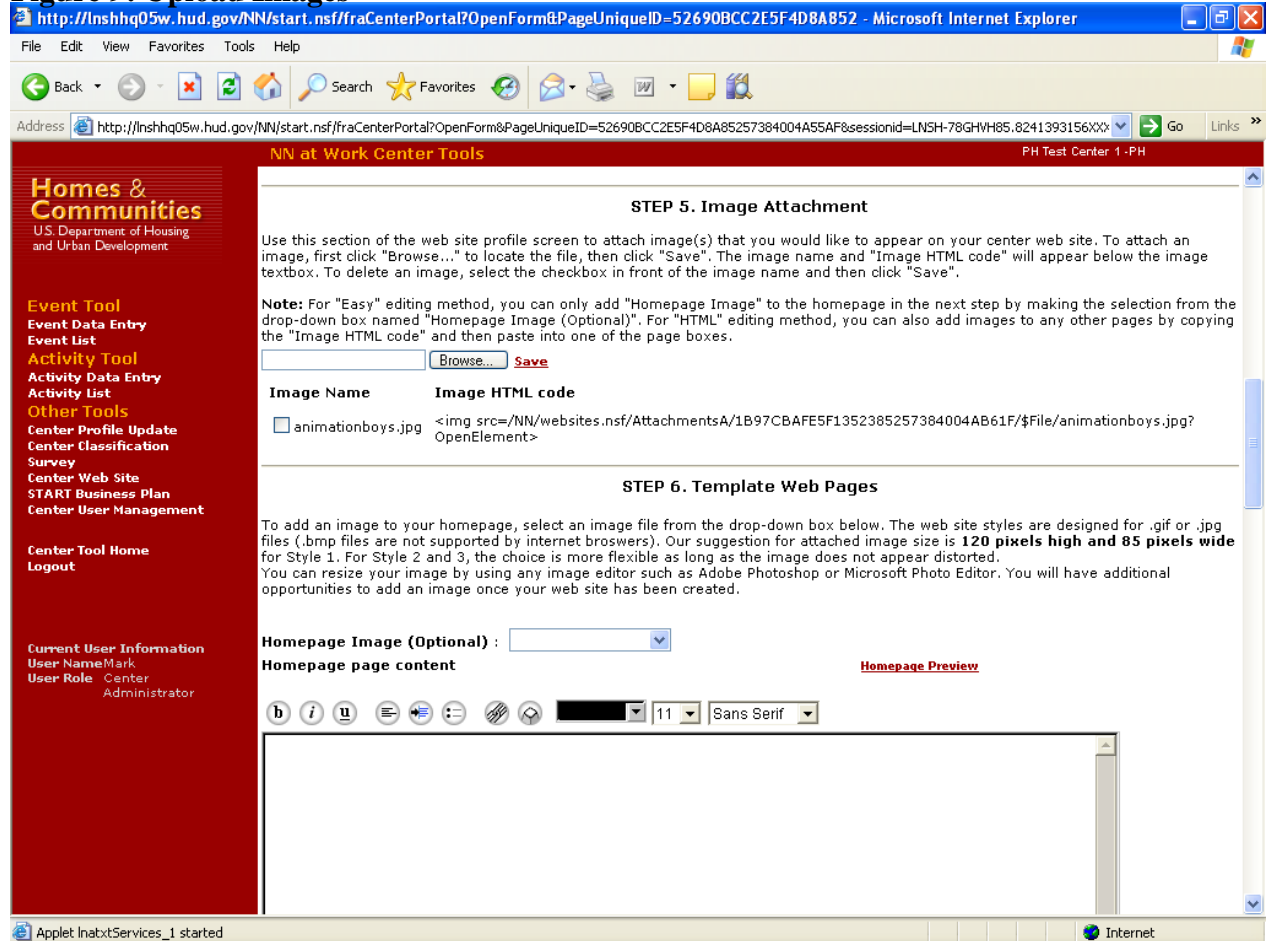
Following are easy to follow steps and tips to assist with image uploading. Following these instructions are tips that will help you maintain a high image quality.

Image uploading options

There are two steps for adding images to the Web pages using the HTML method.

Step 5.1: Insert the image into the Word document to serve as a placeholder because the image will not transfer over with the text. This can be done in Word by opening up a picture file or finding a clipart and selecting the INSERT option located on the tool bar. Later, replace the placeholder with the image code found in the Web site Creation Tool's image library that was created during the previous step.

Step 5.2: Save images into the Web site Creation Tool's image library. Add the images later, once the Word document is transformed into a Web page.

Neither of the above HTML methods is automatic; for both options you must follow the steps above to make the image appear in a desired location. Getting an image into its desired location can be a "trial and error" process if a placeholder is not created in the Word document. However, Word makes it easy, when a placeholder is created, you will find an X in the location where the image should appear. You must perform Steps 5.1 and 5.2 to obtain the desired image location.

An image's HTML code is created when following Step 5.2, saving an image to the image library. You can copy that HTML code and replace it with the placeholder HTML code. You will need to scroll through the coding to locate the code used for the image. Note: It's best to remember the text that comes right before the image, locate that text in the coding and scroll down to find the image's placeholder HTML code. **Important Note**: The placeholder image's HTML code and the one created in the image library may be the same, but you have to replace it anyway. Word does not convert images to HTML properly.

Helpful Tips to Make Uploading Easier

❖ Copy and paste the HTML code from your uploaded picture into the desired editing box.
❖ Use a smaller picture on the homepage because the Web Site Creation Tool templates are pre-set. Larger images could be distorted or run into text already created through the template. When adding images always take advantage of the preview option when editing as it will allow you to see how the page will look once it's on the Web. This will allow you to resize the image if necessary.
❖ Consider how each of the three graphic styles will affect the page layout by previewing each style.

Tools to Improve Image Quality When Uploading Images

Microsoft Office Picture
1) Open the selected picture, right click on the picture; and select Microsoft Office Picture in the pop-up menu.
2) The picture opens in the Microsoft Office Picture view; you can edit the size, shape, and brightness here.
3) Save the picture as a Joint Photographic Experts Group (.jpg) file. It is recommended that centers use .jpg files for photographs and Graphic Interchange Format (.gif) files for logos, charts, graphs, and other artwork because those image files are most compatible with the Web Site Creation Tool. The tool will accept .bit files, but the image may not show as clearly.
4) Once you have saved your picture, upload it to the Web tool.

Paint
1) Open and copy the desired picture onto a blank paint clipboard, and save the picture as a .jpg file.
2) You can use the design tools to adjust the size, brightness and shape.
3) Once you have made your adjustments, save the picture as a .jpg file, and then upload to the Web tool.

Figure 10: Name and Save Images

After saving an image, the browser will refresh, and the URL for the image is displayed in a list or image library. It is recommended that you provide descriptive names of the photos so that they are easy to identify. This is helpful when selecting an image to include in a particular section of your Web site. Remember, when using the HTML method, copy the HTML code for multiple images and paste them anywhere in the tool you want an image to appear. While you may upload as many images as you wish, you should limit the number of images loaded into the Web Site Creation Tool's library to avoid confusion as you build your Web site.

Step 6. Template Web Pages

Using Microsoft Word

The following instructions are only for those using the HTML method to create their center's Web site. When using the Easy Method, type directly into the Web Creation Tool primary pages. **Remember:** Formatting is limited when using the Easy method. Refer back to Step 2 located on pages 7 and 8 for Easy method capabilities.

Using Microsoft Word is an easy way to create documents for each section of the Web site design. The first step is to open up a new Word document using the file function located on the menu bar at the top of this screen. See **Figure 11**. After opening up a new Word document, you can add the text you want to appear on the Web site. Use the tools on the menu bar to adjust the text font, color, and size. See **Figure 12**

Figure 11: Open a Word Document
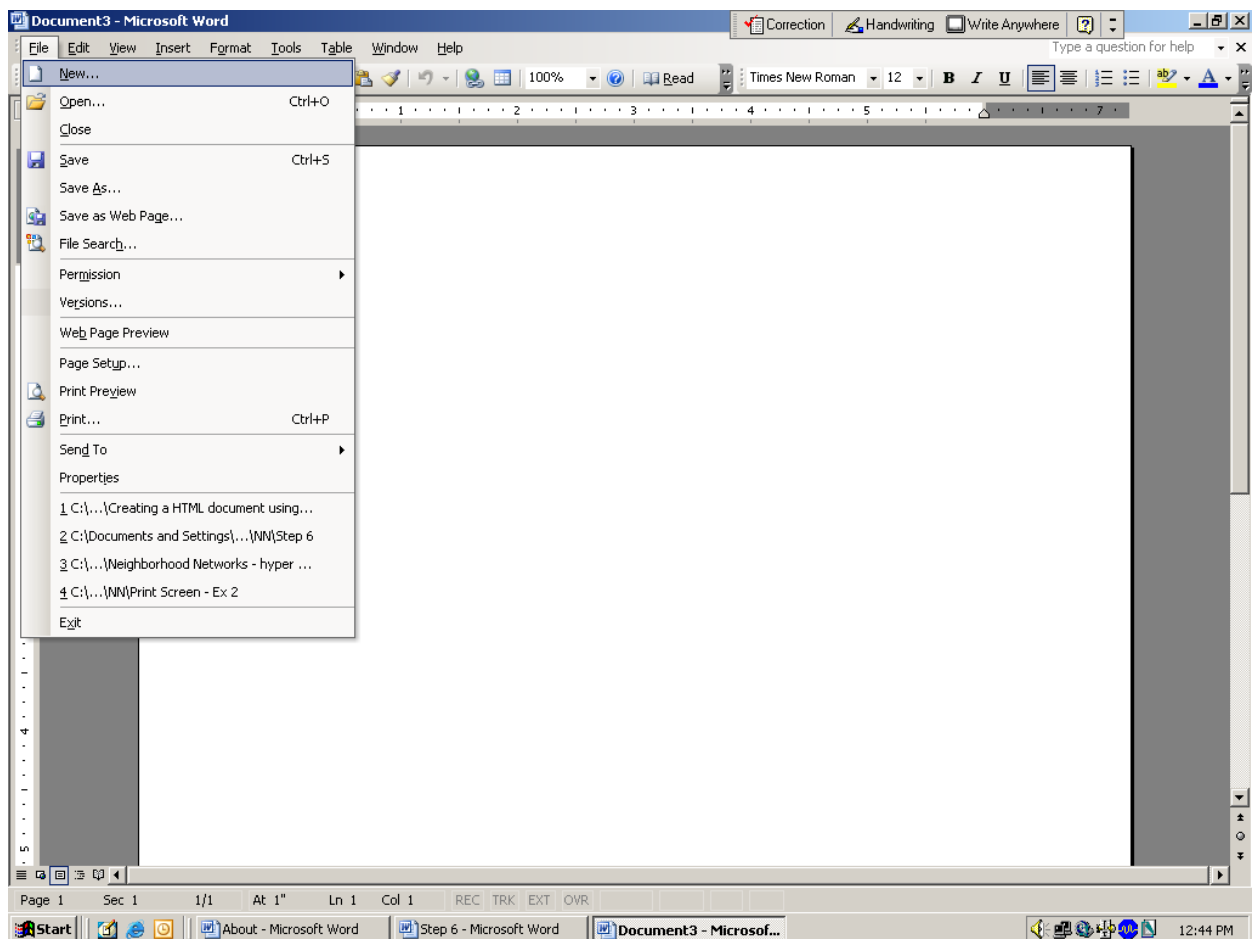
Figure 12: Creating a Web Page as a Word Document
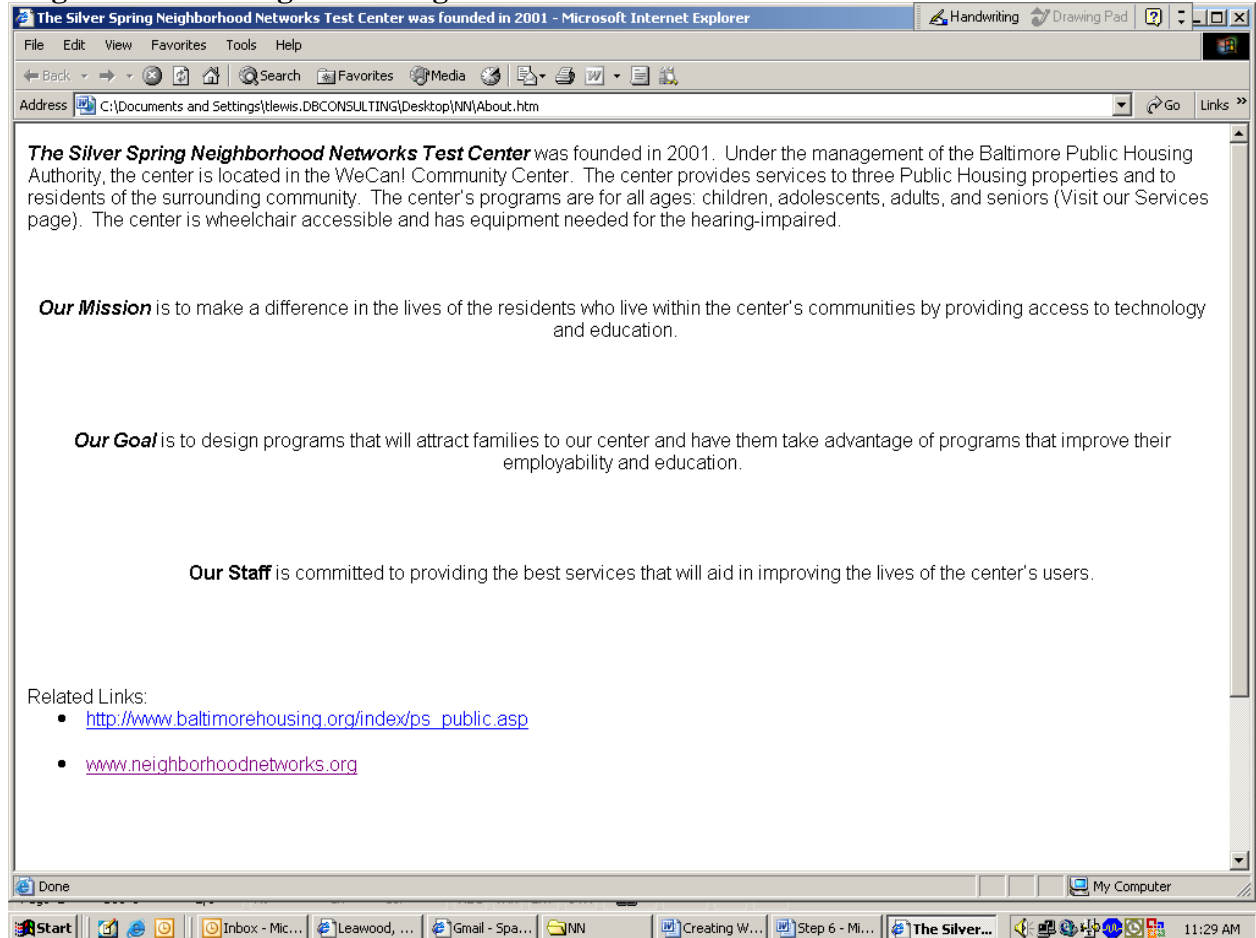
Once you have finished creating the page in Microsoft Word, you can save the page as an .html file by clicking **File** in the menu bar at the top, and selecting **Save As** from the pop-up menu. Select **Web Page** in the Save As type box, and hit **Save.** See **Figures 13 and 14**. This converts your Word document into an HTML file, which you need to create a Web page.

Note: Save your file to an accessible location especially when creating multiple HTML documents, as it may be useful to save files in one easy-to-locate folder. You may also wish to name your files based on the section of the Web site for which the file will be used.

Figure 13: Save the Word Document as a Web Page
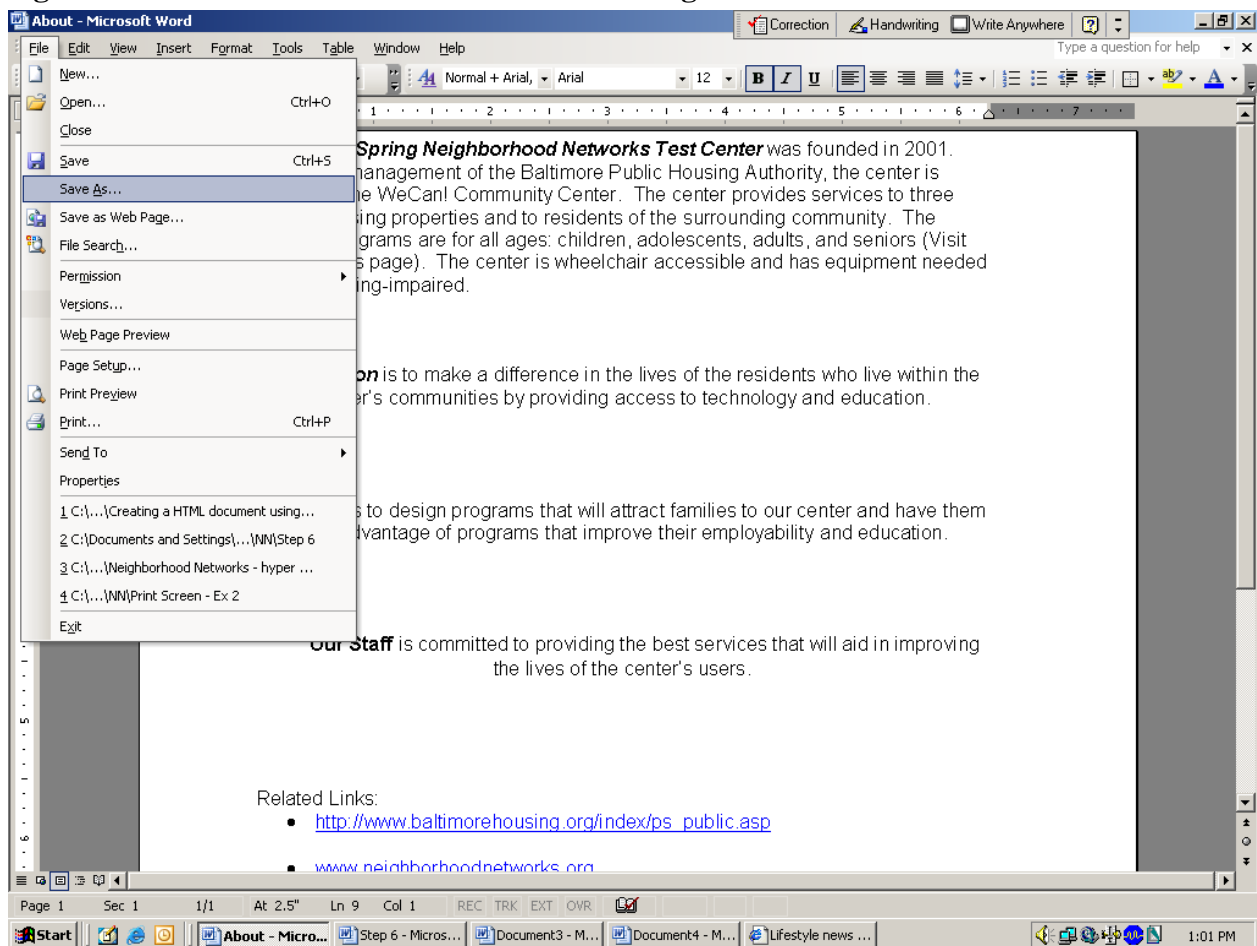
Figure 14: Save the File Name and Type as a Web Page
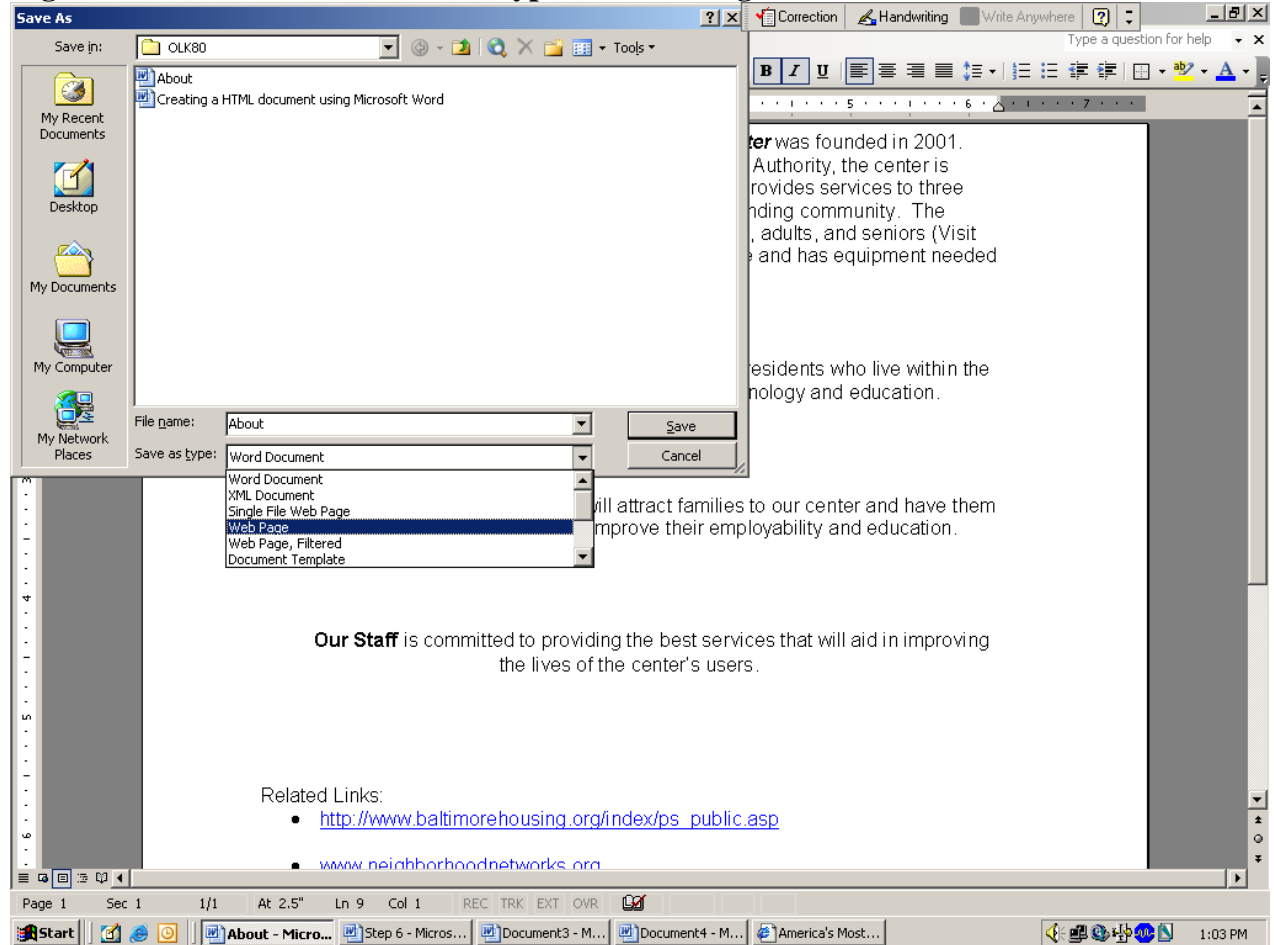
Next, while still in Word, open the Web page created and right click the mouse to select **View Source** from the pop-up menu that appears. This option allows you to see the HTML code behind the Web page. This coding makes your text and images visible on a Web page. See **Figure 15**.

Figure 15: View the HTML Coding
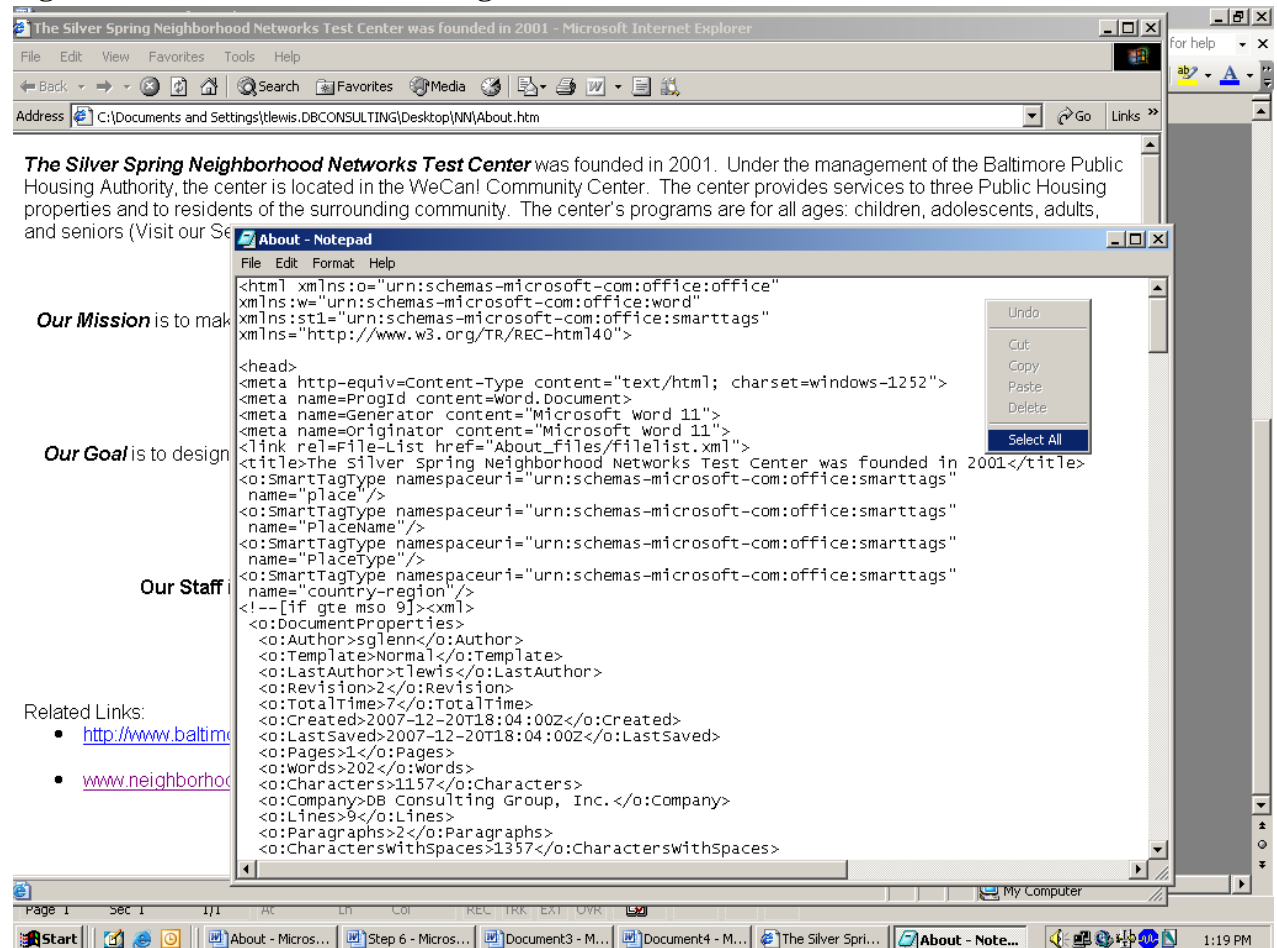
Highlight the text using the mouse, and **copy** the code by right clicking on the document as shown in **Figure 16** below. **Paste** it into the Web site Creation Tool section where the page is to be displayed. See **Figure 17**.

Figure 16: Copy and Save the Word Web Page into the Web Site Creation Tool
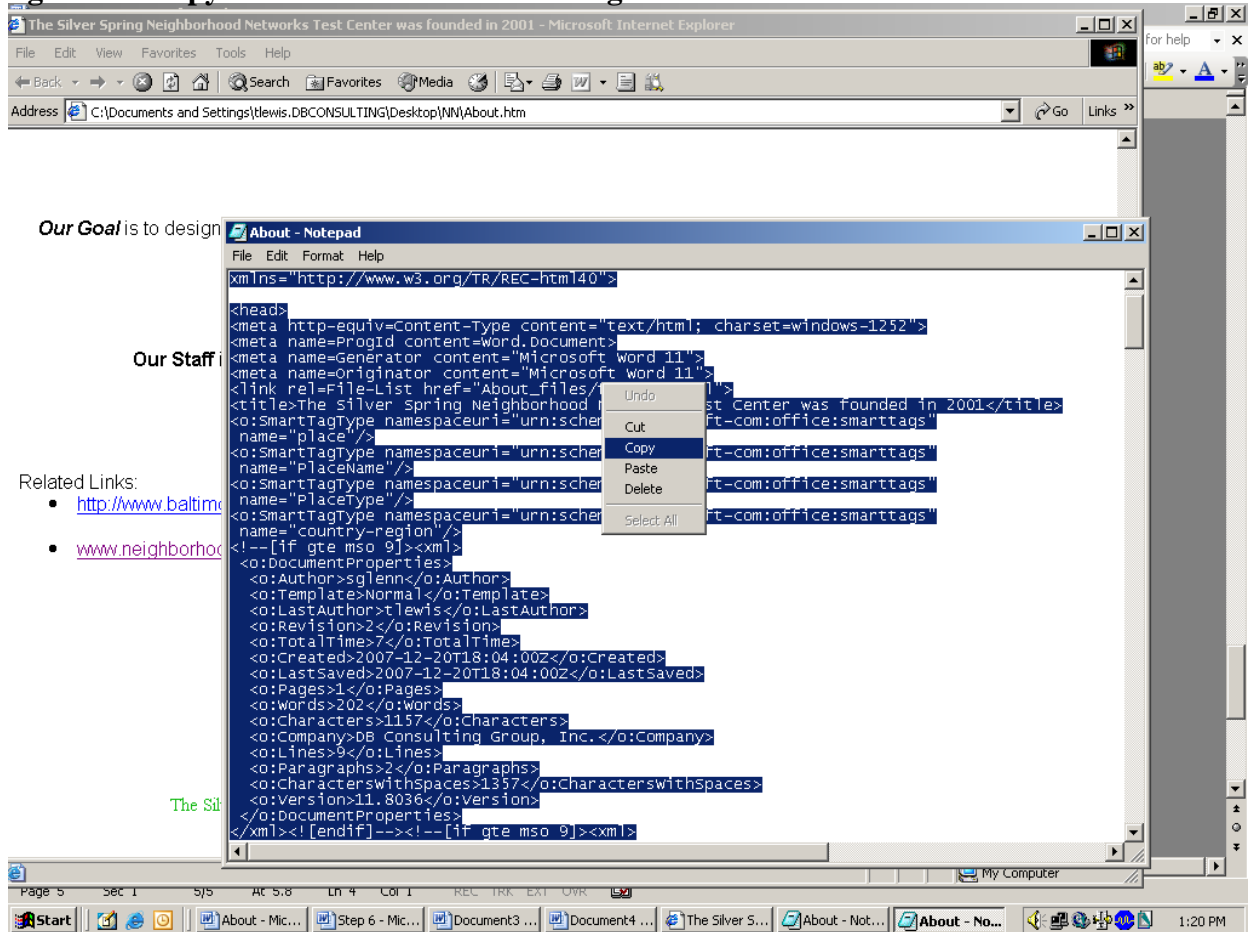
Figure 17: HTML Code Copied and Pasted from the Word Document
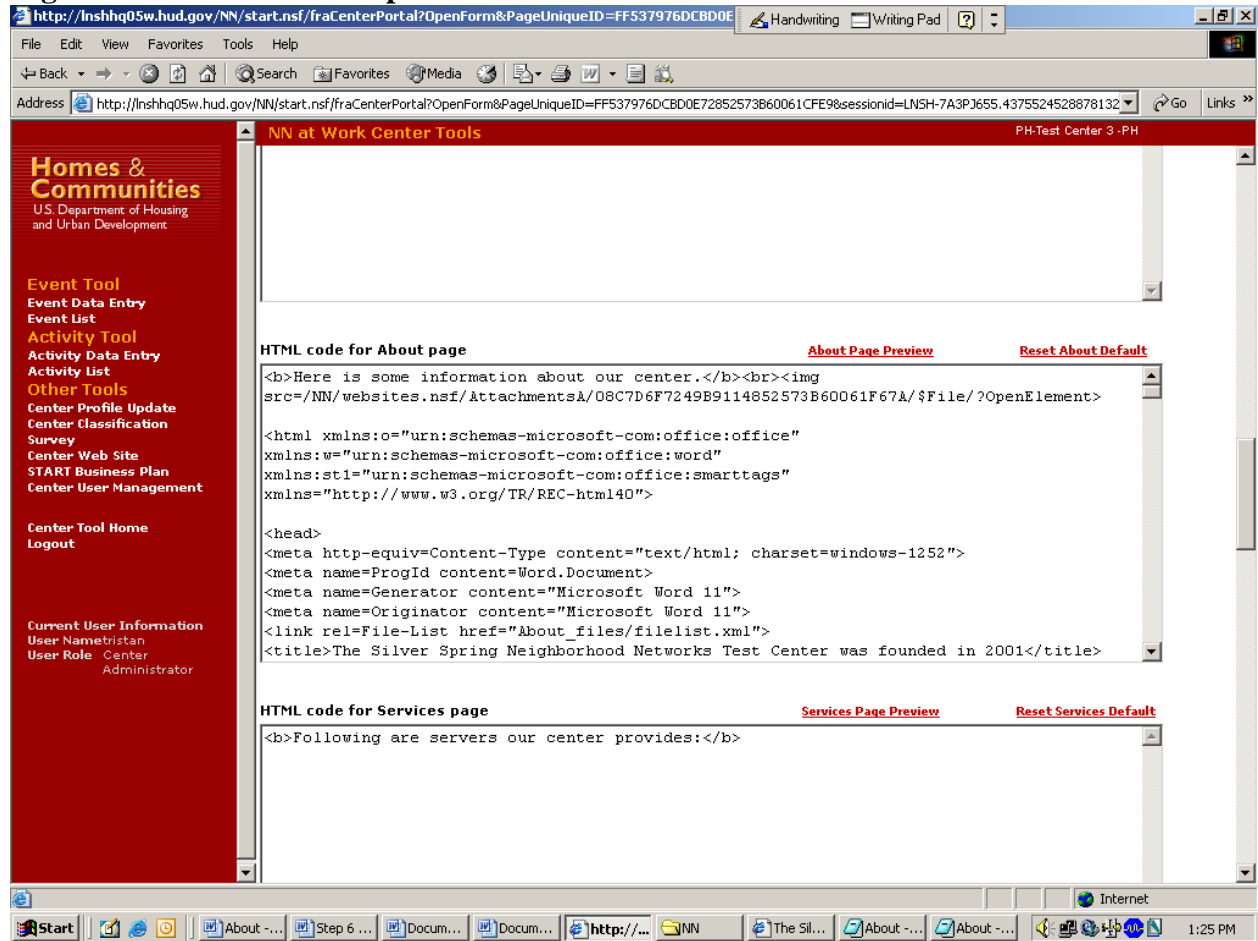
As shown in **Figure 18** below, once the HTML code is copied to the desired section or page of your Web site, scroll to the bottom of the page, and choose the **Preview Web Site** option before saving.

Figure 18: Preview and Save the Web Page
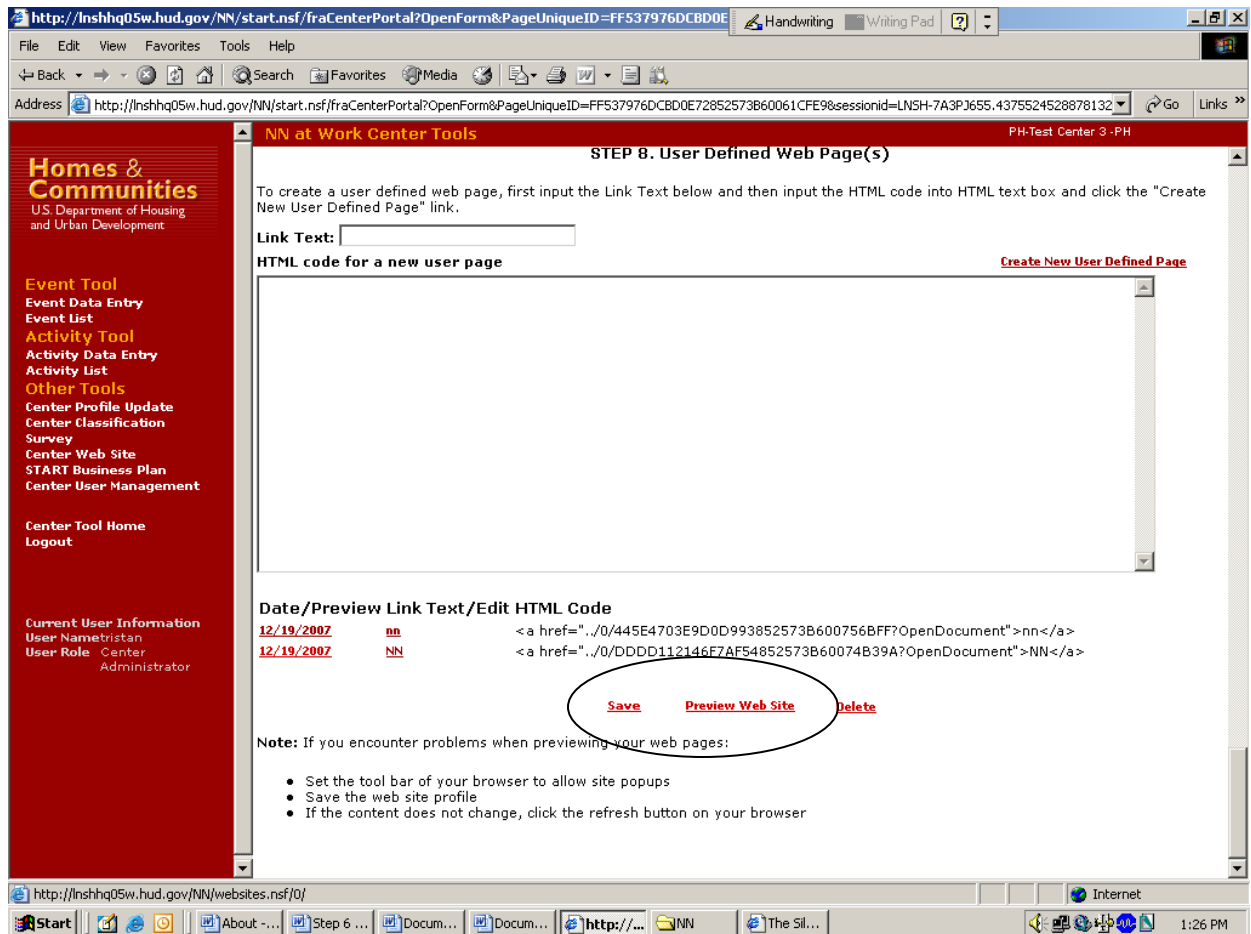
Note: To summarize, to create each Web page for your Neighborhood Networks center Web site using the HTML method:

- Create the page in Word;
- Save the document as a Web page in a separate folder with a name associated for each page or section of your Web site. To make it easier to find, save the folder onto your desktop.
- Locate and open the Web documents.
- Select the View Source option to obtain the HTML code; and
- Copy and paste the code into the desired page box in the Web Site Creation Tool.

Listed below are the Neighborhood Networks Web Site Creation Tool's primary Web pages and their functions.

Primary Web Site Pages

The Neighborhood Networks Web Site Creation Tool is comprised of six primary pages.

- o **The Homepage** – is the first page seen when opening a Web site. The Homepage provides general information. A Neighborhood Networks center's homepage can showcase the center name, address, a picture of the center, and even the mission statement.

- o **About Page** – details information about an organization. On the About Page, insert the center's vision/goal, focus area(s), history, days and hours of operation, service area, staff, volunteers, and partners.

- o **Services Page** – highlights the services provided by an organization. Neighborhood Networks center pages should highlight all programs and services offered. Users can input the names of each program or service and add a short description of each, along with the responsible staff and/or partner.

- o **News/Events Page –** offers information pertaining to special events and news a center may want to highlight. On the News/Events page, the monthly or annual calendar of events may be posted, highlighting special events such as Neighborhood Networks Week, training classes, advisory board meetings, guest speaker presentations, educational trips, and community happenings. In addition, center staff can highlight a "Resident of the Month", graduation ceremonies, and award recipients.

- o **Contact Page –** contains name and contact information of staff responsible for services provided by an organization. On a Neighborhood Networks center Contact Page, center staff can add contact information for the center director, assistants, instructors, volunteers, and even partners.

- o **Useful Links Page** – is designed for the center user/resident. The Useful Links Page contains Web addresses that link to external Web sites, such as the Department of Labor's *Careeronestop*, local colleges and universities, and government and local agencies that provide services to the residents. By using the Useful Links page, residents and center staff can be connected to national, local and area-specific information on financial services, education, jobs, health care, and family services. Tips and information for identifying useful resources within your community are included in the attached "Asset Mapping Guide".

o In addition, the HTML option of the Web Site Creation Tool allows users to create **User Defined Pages**. These pages are created in the same way as the primary pages but are created as hyperlinks, better known as links. For example, a center's calendar of events can be created as a User Defined page and added to the News/Events page as a link. This allows the user to highlight other relevant information and showcase the calendar of events as well without having to create a busy, unattractive page. Included below on Page 24 are instructions for creating hyperlinks.

Step 7. User Defined Page Links

When using the HTML method to create your center's Web site, you can create additional pages and add them as links to the primary pages (Homepage, About, Services, News/Events, or Contact). These pages are called User Defined Pages, see **Figure 19** below. You can:
- Create the page using a Word document;
- Save the document as a Web page;
- Locate and open the file;
- Select the View Source option to obtain the HTML code;
- Copy and paste the code into the User Defined Web Pages box;
- Use the Link Text box to name the page;
- Choose the **Create New User Defined Page** link that is located on the upper right hand side of the box; and
- Save the content.

Once the content is saved, the HTML code for the site appears below the box for User Defined Web Page (s) box. You can copy and paste the code into the page desired. Once the page is opened, the link appears. By clicking on the link, the information appears.

Tip: User-defined pages are created just like images. Copy the HTML code that links to your new page into the desired Web page.

Figure 19: Create User Defined Page

IV. Creating Hyperlinks

You can create hyperlinks with the Neighborhood Networks Web Site Creation Tool. Hyperlinks are shortened reference pointers that allow access to other Web sites or documents. Hyperlinks are used in the place of long Web addresses. They are great for referencing resourceful information found on a different Web site.

For example: instead of having a resident input the http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/nnw/nnwindex.cfm link to retrieve the Neighborhood Networks Home page, you can shorten the link to read Neighborhood Networks Home Page and add the link to the Useful Links Page. See the steps below.

- When creating the Neighborhood Networks center Web site, you can add hyperlinks in any of the primary pages along with text and images. In addition, all hyperlinks can be added as one page, known as the Useful links page. This is a great page for center users to refer to when seeking information about services provided by other community resources. Refer back to page 21 for the function of the Useful links page.

You can create hyperlinks in a Word document and transfer the HTML code to the Web Site Creation Tool. See the instructions and examples below.

To create a hyperlink to reference other Web sites or documents, you should follow the following steps:
1. Using Word, type in the text to use for the Hyperlink. See **Figure 20 on the next page**;
2. Highlight the text by holding down the left mouse button and dragging it across the text. See **Figure 21 below**;
3. Select the Hyperlink option from the pop-up menu. See **Figure 21**;
4. Enter the Web site address (URL) into the address field. See **Figure 22 below**; and
5. Click OK.
6. Follow the instructions on pages 13-20 to convert your Word document into a Web page.

To test the Hyperlink, you can place the cursor (using the mouse) over the link, and then left click the mouse and hold down the CTRL button (from the keyboard) simultaneously. This action should direct you to the designated external Web site.

Figure 20: Hyperlink Text
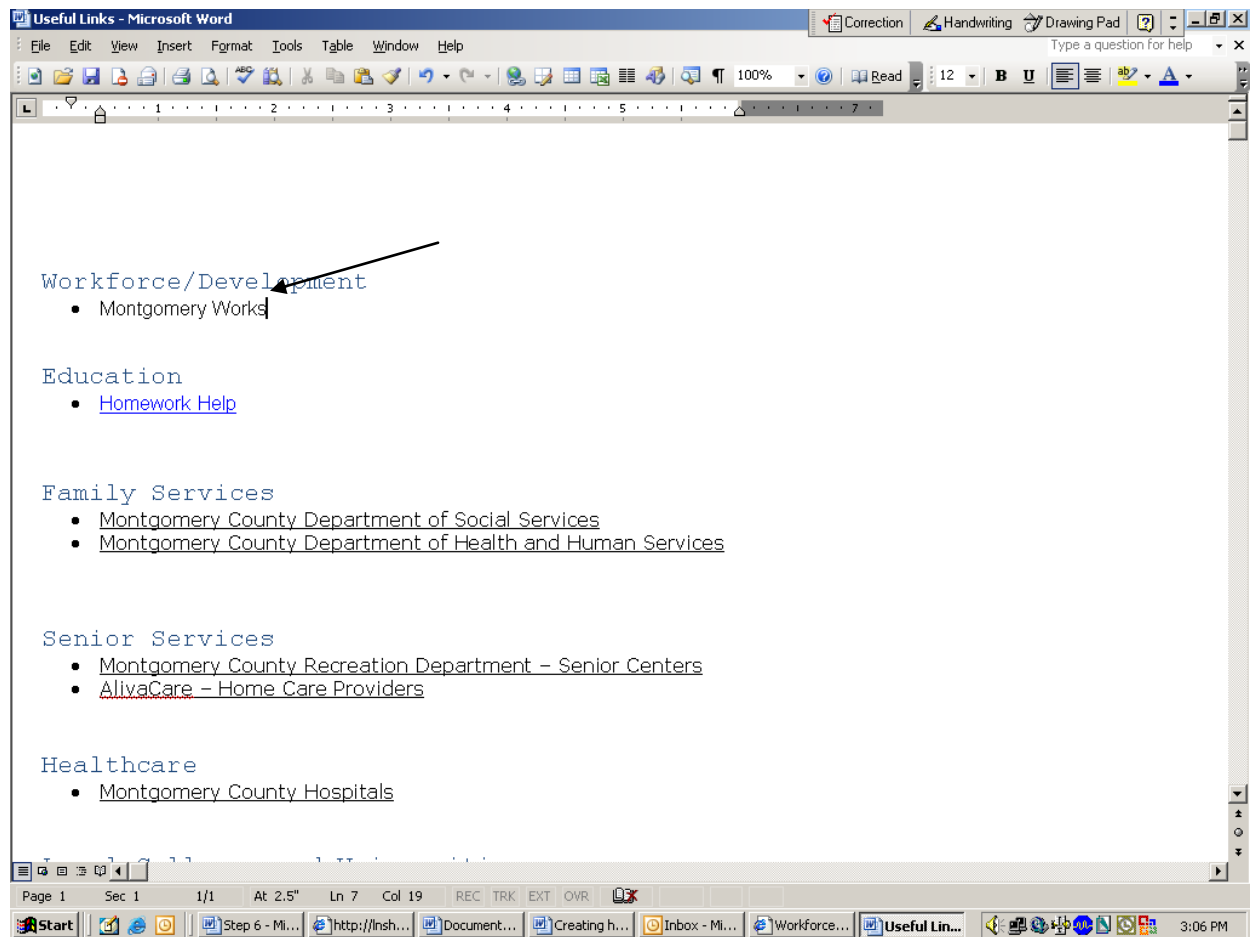
Figure 21: Highlight and Select Hyperlink
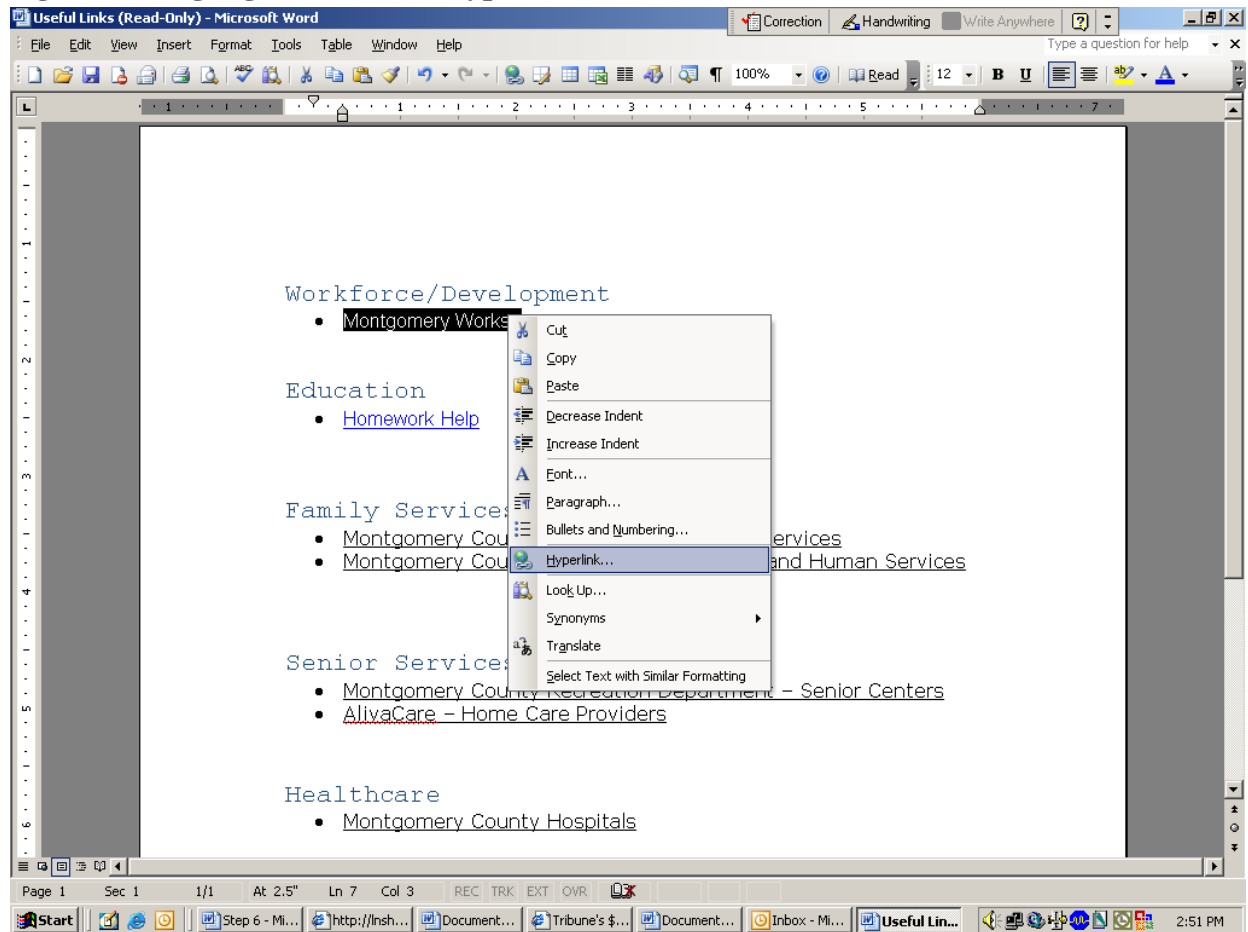
Figure 22: Choose Text to Display instead of the URL
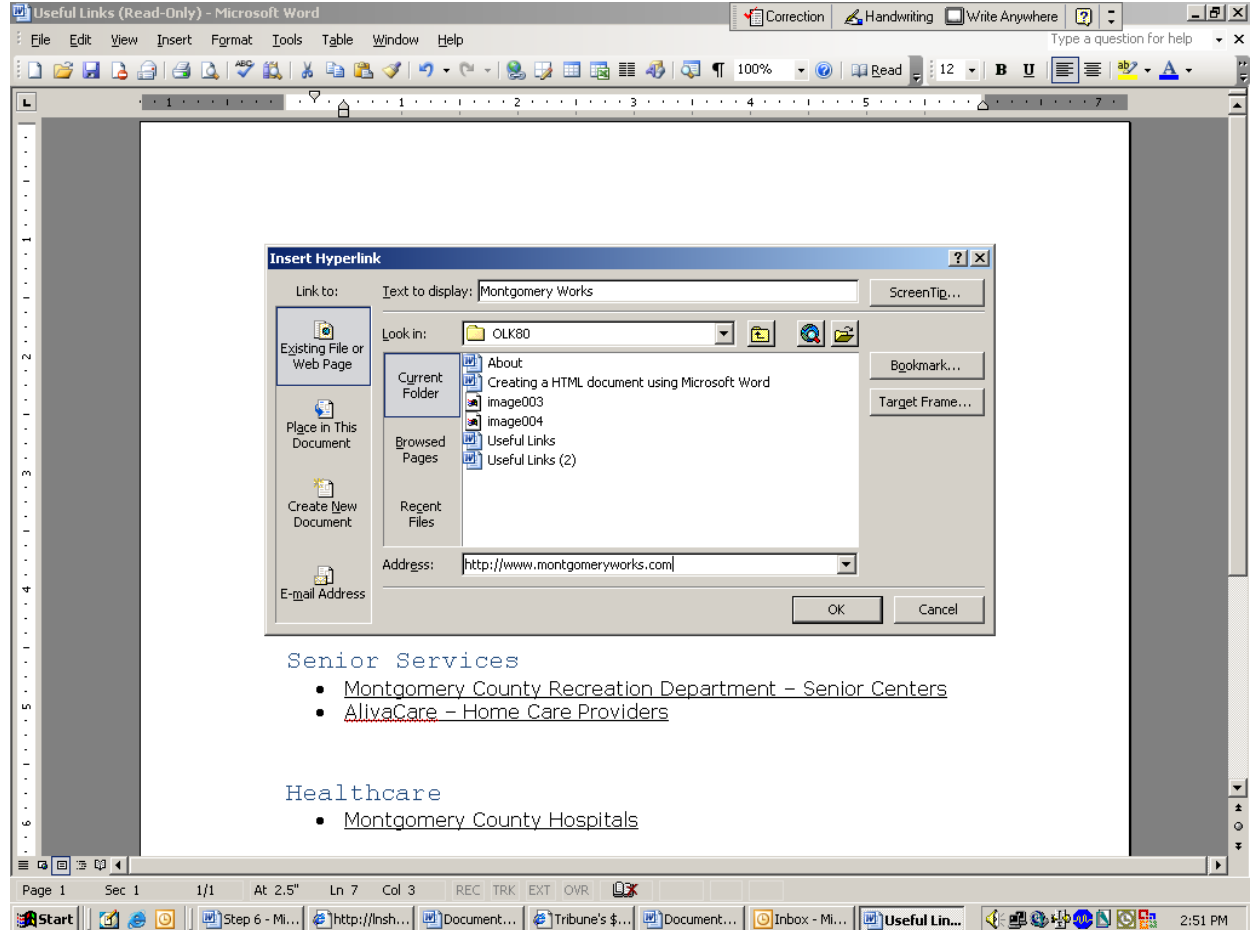
Once you have created all of the Web pages, take a moment to preview them to ensure that the information is legible, attractive, and accurate. Make sure all pages are saved. This is the last step of Web site creation.

Congratulations!

You've created your Neighborhood Networks Web Site!

You can now return to **Section 1 of the Web Site Creation Tool,** check the box marked **Open to the Public,** and share your center's Web site with others on the World Wide Web.

V.   Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I name my Web page?
A: A name is generated for your center by the Web Creation Tool. But you can edit the designated name. Please remove all spaces from your designated name link. For example, for the PHA Study Center; the Web site address will appear as www.neighborhoodnetworks.PHAStudyCenter.org.html once you remove the spaces in the center's name.   (NOTE: the Web Site Creation Tool will automatically insert "neighborhoodnetworks" prior to your center's name).

Q: If I edit the Web page name/URL should it include my Housing Authority name or the center name?
A: The Housing Authority may already have its own Web site. To avoid confusion you should probably use only the center's name. But it probably makes sense to ask appropriate PHA staff prior to finalizing the name to be used.

Q: How many layout designs does the Web Tool offer?
A: The Web Creation Tool has three designs available. Design #2 is the default.

Q: Once I pick a layout and have entered and uploaded my pictures can I change the style?
A: Yes, after you have entered your content into the editing boxes and uploaded your images to your Web site, you can still change the layout design at any time. You simply click on the design style and save.

Q: Does the Housing Authority's Executive Director or other staff have to approve the Web site before it is made public?
A: Yes, all images, graphics and photographs displayed on your page must be approved by a Housing Authority official before the page is made public. If you use pictures of individuals, especially children, you must have a written consent form signed by the parents.

Q: What are my options when creating my Web page? Can I use more then one at a time?
A: You have two options for creating the Web page, the Easy method or the HTML method. The HTML allows you to be more creative with your Web page. Only one or the other can be used to create the center's Web site.

Q: Can I enter my content in italics?
A: Italics are discouraged, as they can be difficult to read, but may be used when necessary for emphasis.

Q: When formatting my content, should I use headings, titles and capitalize titles?
A: Yes, topics and headings should be in "title case". In title case, the first word and all principal words are capitalized, e.g., Technical Assistance and Training. Other text should be in "sentence case". In sentence case, the first word of a sentence and all proper

nouns in the sentence are capitalized, e.g., Neighborhood Networks corporate headquarters is located in downtown Silver Spring, Maryland.

Q: Should I include the logo for my Housing Authority?
A: It is a good idea to include the logo but appropriate PHA staff should decide.

Q: Can I display pictures of center staff, residents and center users?
A: Yes, but you should have a letter of consent for the residents before displaying their pictures. If you are using pictures of minors, please obtain a written consent form signed by the parents.

Q: Should I include pictures of the center's facilities?
A: Yes, it is a good idea to include pictures of the center's facilities and resources. A picture of the center from the outside is a good idea. You can also include pictures of center activities, community events, residents and center staff using the center and participating in center-sponsored activities.

Q: What is the best format to save pictures and other images?
A: For best results, drawings, graphs, and charts as a .gif file; photographs in the .jpgs format. Any images or graphics that were created in another format (e.g., .tif) should be converted to either .gif or .jpg files prior to posting on a Web page. Bit files will be accepted but the image quality will not be as good. In general, when you convert an image or graphic for use on a Web site, certain aspects such as color or fonts may be affected.

Q: Will the quality of the image remain the same if I edit it?
A: The quality of a .jpg image degrades every time the image is edited and saved. If you need to edit an image, you should always go back to the original source file, edit it, and then save it as a separate .jpg file.

Q: Can you open and edit your images in the Web page tool?
A: No, you should edit your pictures before uploading your image on your Web page. Please make sure you have edited the picture to the correct size. Once uploaded and **saved** you are unable to delete the image from the library. Please remember that images should be resized as necessary to fit the format of the page.

Q: How can I edit images?
A: You can open and edit your pictures, logos and graphics in Microsoft Office Picture Manager and/or Paint. Both options allow you to resize, crop, and adjust brightness and clarity. Once you have edited your image, save it as a .jpg.

Q: Can I resize my images and graphics?
A: Yes, but you should minimize any extra background space in an image by "cropping" the image. This will help focus attention on the subject of the photo and reduce the overall size of the image.

Q: Should I label my pictures?
A: Yes, you should label each image. Every image or graphic **must** have a text box or text label. This text label describes the picture or graphic to people using a text-based browser and people with disabilities using a text reader. The text label must describe the photo or image for those who cannot see it.

Q: Can I remove an image or graphic after I upload and save it on the Web tool?
A: Currently, the Web tool cannot delete uploaded images and graphics. You can remove it from the edit content box and it will no longer be displayed on the Web page. If you upload pictures to Web Site Creation Tool, you will be unable to delete them permanently. They will be stored in the database. To save space in the database, please only upload pictures and graphics that have been approved for use by appropriate PHA or MF staff and are highly desirable.

Q: Can I upload animated graphics to my Web page?
A: No. The Neighborhood Networks Web Creation Tool does not have the capability of supporting graphics. Animated graphics add weight to a page, and they don't work with all Web browsers. They can also present problems for people with disabilities.

Q: Can I upload music or video clips?
A: No. The Neighborhood Networks Web Creation Tool does not have the capability of supporting music or video files.

Q: Can I upload documents to be downloaded and or to be printed by center users?
A: No. The Web Site Creation Tool does not have the capability to upload documents to be downloaded and/or to be printed. But you can save the documents in a hyperlink, add it to one of the primary pages, and users can open the hyperlink and print it.

Q: Can I create hyperlinks for center partnerships and frequently used resources?
A: Yes. You can create links for partnerships and resources on the "Helpful Links Page".

Q: Can I delete hyperlinks?
A: Yes, you can delete hyperlinks from your Web page.

Q: Where can I display contact information?
A: All your contact center information should be displayed in the contact page.

Q: Can I display monthly announcements and an event calendar on my Web site?
A: Yes. The Web site is a useful tool to inform your residents and center users of upcoming events. This information can be created in the New/Events page.

VI.   Web Design Facts and Tips for the Virtual World Ahead

Following are some tips to consider when creating your Neighborhood Networks center Web site.

First Impressions Count

While visitors are more satisfied with their total Web experiences, they are less willing to spend time on useless or unattractive sites. People spend an average of about 45 seconds viewing each interior page and less than 30 seconds on home pages. Visitors form their first impression about a site within the first nine seconds. The Web is entering a new era where simplicity and style are in. The best sites attract and retain visitors and keep them coming back for more.

Psychology of Colors

Web site visitors respond to colors and visual elements on a psychological level. Making sure center sites are appealing and content rich is vital. Web site colors and images must be in harmony with the message. Using the right color choice can impact the impression a site makes on the visitor. Color schemes should enhance the site and its content. Colors can express a center's personality and values. Web site designers should use appropriate color associations. For example, the UPS brown symbolizes reliability, strength, and maturity. Green is the color of money and signifies good health, life, youth, and freshness. John Deere and Starbucks use green as their primary color. Try to limit color schemes to two or three complementary colors; small accents of other colors can be added for highlighting or attention grabbing. The Neighborhood Networks templates are designed with Neighborhood Networks signature colors and cannot be changed. However, there will be other images with color such as charts, calendars, and photographs that you should consider when choosing the right color schemes to make your sites attractive to the viewer.

Images That Inspire

Quality photographs working in harmony with text can be very powerful in Web design. The key is balance; everything done in moderation. Of course, content is still king on the Web, so Web designers should not get carried away with flash. Site visitors want information fast with few distractions. Avoid forcing visitors to wait for huge files to download. Font preferences have remained consistent. Veranda and Arial fonts remain the popular choice. Headings and other display text can be more varied. Font sizes should not be too large or small. Black text with a white background still works best, but black or dark text with a muted yellow, light gray, or blue background also works fine. Text should be easy on the eye. Leave lots of white space to enhance readability. Try reducing word counts to 150 or less per page. Text should be short and concise, allowing for speedy scanning. The two primary image formats used are Graphic Interchange Format (.gif) and Joint Photographic Experts Group (.jpg). For best results save drawings, graphs and charts as a .gif file; photographs in the .jpg format.

<u>**Tips for Writing User-Friendly Content**</u>

- **Use bold headlines and subheads:** Headlines, subheads, and bullets highlight text. Write meaningful headlines. Bulleted lists are more appealing to the reader's eye, draw attention, and make content easier to scan. Underlined text is usually saved for links. Limit the use of ALL CAPS and *italics* as it is harder for the eye to comprehend.
- **Keep it short and scrollable:** Keep pages to one screen and use the inverted pyramid style. In other words, place the most important information at the top of the page. Use short sentences that keep the story flowing.
- **Chunk the content:** Write Web content in chunks. Break the text into segments or paragraphs less than 75 words each. This improves comprehension and content recall. To retain focus, use each chunk to convey only one idea. Active voice works best and the use of unnecessary sentences and words should be eliminated.

<u>**Other Web Design Standards to Consider**</u>

- **Size:** Images should be designed to work within at least the 640x480 monitor resolution.
- **Cropping:** To help focus attention on the subject of the photograph, reduce the overall size of the image and minimize extra background space.
- **Borders:** Photographs and some graphics, such as maps, should have a one-inch border. Graphics such as logos, icons, and graphical text should not have a border.
- **Updating Web content:** Web content should be reviewed at least quarterly to ensure that the information is current and accurate. Always maintain a copy of deleted files in the event information is needed in the future.
- **Animated Graphics:** Animated graphics add significant weight to a page, don't work with all Web browsers, and can be distracting to site visitors. The Neighborhood Networks Web Site Creation Tool does not support animated graphics.

_____

For more information regarding creating a center Web site using the Neighborhood Networks Web Site Creation Tool, contact the toll-free Neighborhood Networks Information Center at (888) 312-2743 or visit the Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org.